

OPINION 735

BIOMPHALARIA PRESTON, 1910 (GASTROPODA): GRANT UNDER THE PLENARY POWERS OF PRECEDENCE OVER *PLANORBINA* HALDEMAN, 1842, *TAPHIUS* H. & A. ADAMS, 1855, AND *ARMIGERUS* CLESSIN 1884.

RULING.—(1) Under the plenary powers it is hereby Ruled that the generic name *Biomphalaria* Preston, 1910, is to be given precedence over the generic names *Planorbina* Haldeman, 1842, *Taphius* H. & A. Adams, 1855, and *Armigerus* Clessin, 1884, by any zoologist who considers that any or all of these names apply to the same taxonomic genus.

(2) The following generic names are hereby placed on the Official List of Generic Names in Zoology with the Name Numbers specified:

- (a) *Biomphalaria* Preston, 1910 (gender : feminine), type-species, by monotypy, *Biomphalaria smithi* Preston, 1910 (Name No. 1675);
- (b) *Planorbina* Haldeman, 1842 (gender : feminine), type-species, by designation by Dall, 1905, *Planorbis olivaceus* Spix, 1827 (by direction under the plenary powers, not available for use in preference to *Biomphalaria* Preston, 1910, by any zoologist who considers the type-species of these two nominal genera to be congeneric) (Name No. 1676);
- (c) *Taphius* H. & A. Adams, 1855 (gender : masculine), type-species, by original designation, *Planorbis andecolus* d'Orbigny, 1835 (by direction under the plenary powers, not available for use in preference to *Biomphalaria* Preston, 1910, by any zoologist who considers the type-species of these two nominal genera to be congeneric) (Name No. 1677);
- (d) *Armigerus* Clessin, 1884 (gender : masculine), type-species, by designation by Morrison, 1947, *Planorbis albicans* Pfeiffer, 1839) (by direction under the plenary powers, not available for use in preference to *Biomphalaria* Preston, 1910, by any zoologist who considers the type-species of these two nominal genera to be congeneric) (Name No. 1678).

(3) The following specific names are hereby placed on the Official List of Specific Names in Zoology with the Name Numbers specified:

- (a) *smithi* Preston, 1910, as published in the binomen *Biomphalaria smithi* (type-species of *Biomphalaria* Preston, 1910) (Name No. 2079);
- (b) *olivaceus* Spix, 1827, as published in the binomen *Planorbis olivaceus* (type-species of *Planorbina* Haldeman, 1842) (Name No. 2080);
- (c) *andecolus* d'Orbigny, 1835, as published in the binomen *Planorbis andecolus* (type-species of *Taphius* H. & A. Adams, 1855) (Name No. 2081);
- (d) *albicans* Pfeiffer, 1839, as published in the binomen *Planorbis albicans* (type-species of *Armigerus* Clessin, 1884) (Name No. 2082).

HISTORY OF THE CASE (Z.N.(S.) 1392)

The present case was first submitted to the office of the Commission by Dr. C. W. Wright in October 1958. An application was sent to the printer on 13 July 1961 and was published on 2 February 1962 in *Bull. zool. Nomencl.* **19** : 39–41. Public Notice of the possible use of the plenary powers in the present case was given in the same part of the *Bulletin* as well as to the other prescribed serial publications (Constitution Art. 12b; *Bull. zool. Nomencl.* **21** : 184) and to six specialist serials.

Dr. Wright's application was supported by Dr. R. Hubendick, Prof. B. G. Peters, Dr. E. Binder, Dr. H. J. O'D. Burke-Gaffney, Dr. V. de V. Clark (*Bull. zool. Nomencl.* **19** : 260–261), Dr. S. M. Willmott, Prof. E. A. Malek, Prof. F. S. Barbosa (*Bull. zool. Nomencl.* **20** : 97–98), Dr. D. S. Brown, Dr. R. J. Pitchford, Dr. G. Mandahl-Barth and Prof. J. A. van Eeden. Objections by Dr. P. H. Fischer and Dr. H. J. Walter were published in *Bull. zool. Nomencl.* **19** : 253; **20** : 93–97. Dr. Wright's reply to Dr. Walter's objection appeared in *Bull. zool. Nomencl.* **20** : 98–99.

DECISION OF THE COMMISSION

On 24 October 1963 the Members of the Commission were invited to vote under the Three-Month Rule on Voting Paper (63)26 either for or against the proposals set out in *Bull. zool. Nomencl.* **19** : 41. At the close of the prescribed voting period on 24 January 1964 the state of the voting was as follows:

Affirmative votes—twenty-one (21), received in the following order: China, Hemming, Brinck, Hering, Vokes, Bonnet, Mayr, Tortonese, Riley, Boschma, Stoll, Jaczewski, Lemche, Uchida, Simpson, Borchsenius, Miller, do Amaral, Alvarado, Binder, Evans.

Negative votes—eight (8): Holthuis, Hubbs, Forest, Obruchev, Mertens, Kraus, Ride, Sabrosky.

Voting Papers not returned—one (1): Munroe.

In returning their negative votes a number of Commissioners commented on Dr. Wright's request. These comments are given below.

Dr. L. B. Holthuis (l.xi.63): "In view of the strongly conflicting statements by the specialists giving evidence here (Wright: "*Taphius* . . . is a name almost unknown to medical biologists and only a little more familiar to professional malacologists"; Fischer: "*Taphius*, que tous les malacologistes connaissent, et que est d'un usage constant depuis plus d'un siècle"; Wright: "*Biomphalaria* . . . is probably the most widely known and is one of the more extensively used of the series"; Fischer: "*Biomphalaria* . . . la majorité des Planorbes de ce groupe n'a jamais été désignée sous ce nom.") and because of several weak points in Dr. Wright's application I cannot give my support to his proposal. These weak points in my opinion are:

- (1) *Planorbina* is evidently the oldest available name in the group of genera under consideration and has been adopted by several prominent workers, and even is included in an authoritative handbook like that of Thiele. These are strong arguments against a suppression of this name.

Corrigendum page 95 line 3

For "Dr. C. W. Wright" read "Dr. C. A. Wright".

- (2) The Commission cannot be the judge of taxonomic problems, and therefore I do not think it correct for the Commission to suppress generic names on the ground of subjective synonymy. Without prejudice about the correctness of the views of Drs. Wright or Walter, it seems not right to suppress the name *Taphius* as a synonym of *Biomphalaria*, as long as there is a chance that these two names represent different taxa. If the Commission grants Dr. Wright's request, Dr. Walter has to find a new name for a genus that before this action had a perfectly valid name. Whatever the Commission does, I feel that it certainly cannot suppress the name *Taphius* altogether. In order to save both *Taphius* and *Biomphalaria* both might be placed on the Official List with the annotation that *Biomphalaria* should be given precedence over *Taphius*.

However, looking at the problem as a whole, I believe that strict priority will lead to the least confusion here. As so many genera are now being lumped, a number of familiar names will disappear and instability will reign till the new nomenclature is settled, why not take this opportunity for a drastic action and adopt the oldest available name, especially as this name has been adopted by several of the foremost authorities? This course will lead to the least confusion and complications.

It is for these reasons that I feel to have to vote against the majority opinion here ”.

Dr. C. L. Hubbs (18.xi.63): “ I am fully sympathetic with the spirit of the proposal by Dr. Wright, but feel that it is definitely the *wrong approach*, unnecessarily confusing taxonomic judgment with nomenclature. The point taken by Dr. Wright could be attained by application of the plenary powers to provide that, if regarded as synonymous with *Biomphalaria*, any of the other genera named (as nominal genera) are not to take precedence by reason of their priority. This would leave such names as *Taphius* (and the others) available for either subgeneric or generic rank. We should not deny such availability ”.

Dr. O. Kraus (16.i.64): “ It seems to me that the Commission is asked by the present application to take an action based on taxonomic arguments but not on nomenclatorial facts. The taxonomy is still under discussion and has not yet been settled as is demonstrated by subsequent comments to the case. So in my opinion the only action which can be taken by the Commission in the present situation is to suppress the name *Planorbina* which for a long period has been only cited in synonymy.

For these reasons I cannot vote for the proposal as it stands at present ”.

Dr. W. D. L. Ride (23.i.64): “ The Commission is being asked to use its plenary powers to restrict freedom of taxonomic action by Wright who, having adopted subjective synonymy, would like to have one of the junior subjective synonyms made senior by the invalidation of the others. Only confusion can result. Those who do not agree with this synonymy will have to propose new names to replace those suppressed (or revive other junior synonyms if these exist). I hold, therefore, that this proposal offends against the spirit of the Code.

There is also a divergence of opinion on the question of usage of *Taphius* (see Fischer). I believe that there should be further discussion and investigation to determine (a) whether or not one or other of these authors has overstated the case regarding usage, (b) if it is desirable that *Biomphalaria* should become the senior synonym in cases of subjective synonymy involving these other generic names, that the plenary powers be used to modify the date of *Biomphalaria* so that it becomes senior in this context. This would produce the desired result in subjective synonymy yet would leave the other names valid for use by those who recognize more than one genus here".

Mr. C. W. Sabrosky (24.i.64): "This case mixes zoology and nomenclature. The "confusion in nomenclature" lamented by several of the supporters of the application is largely difference in zoological opinion, and accordingly use of different zoological names. To adopt *Biomphalaria* will also require changes on the part of those who are accustomed to using *Australorbis* and *Tropicorbis*, both well-known names. It would have been little different to have adopted *Planorbina*, rather than choosing the relatively recent *Biomphalaria* (1910) with so many older names potentially available.

I strongly agree with Hubbs in opposing this method of approach. *Taphius et al.* should not be "indexed" out of reach but should be left accessible for zoologists who consider them applicable to distinct groups, or who might do so in the future. Adoption of the oldest name, *Planorbina*, would leave all the others in subjective synonymy, from which they could be revived at any time without recourse to the Commission by any author who believed that the group they represent should be segregated from the larger one.

Malacologists at the U.S. National Museum tell me that they regard the names in question as falling into two distinct genera, one of which is *Taphius*. *Taphius* should not be suppressed as long as such difference of zoological opinion exists. Actually, the argument is strong for using *Planorbina*, the oldest name. Then *Taphius* (or any other) can be adopted for a distinct genus, or for a subgenus, as an author wishes. It will serve zoology ill to choose a name as young as *Biomphalaria*, and thereby to handicap zoologists in their legitimate study of zoology".

Upon reading these comments the applicant, Dr. Wright, wrote "I see the point of not suppressing *Taphius* in case it should subsequently prove to have validity, and if it is possible for the Commission to preserve both names, but to give *Biomphalaria* the precedence over *Taphius*, I think that this would be an ideal solution to the problem".

Since eight Commissioners had opposed Dr. Wright's proposals, and Dr. Wright himself had agreed that his original application was possibly not the most suitable solution of the problem, the Acting Secretary to the Commission decided to lay before the Commission the alternative proposals suggested by three Commissioners in their comments, and agreed to by Dr. Wright. Consequently, on 30 October 1964 the Members of the Commission were invited to vote on Voting Paper (64)24 either for or against proposals contained in a report accompanying that Voting Paper. The report contained details of voting on V.P. (63)26 together with the comments of Commissioners (as set out above) and the following proposal:

"A number of Commissioners in returning negative votes, indicated their willingness to grant precedence under the plenary powers to *Biomphalaria* over its senior subjective synonyms. Dr Wright has agreed with this proposal (see accompanying comments).

It is therefore proposed that the Commission vote on V.P. (64)24 to take the following action:

- (1) to Rule under the plenary powers that *Biomphalaria* Preston, 1910, is to be given precedence over the generic names *Planorbina* Haldeman, 1842, *Taphius* H. & A. Adams, 1855 and *Armigerus* Clessin, 1884, by any zoologist who considers that any or all of these names apply to the same taxonomic genus.
- (2) to place the following generic names on the Official List of Generic Names in Zoology:
 - (a) *Biomphalaria* Preston, 1910 (gender : feminine), type-species, by monotypy, *Biomphalaria smithi* Preston, 1910;
 - (b) *Planorbina* Haldeman, 1842 (gender : feminine), type-species, by designation by Dall, 1905, *Planorbis olivaceus* Spix, 1827 (under the plenary powers not to be given precedence over *Biomphalaria* Preston, 1910);
 - (c) *Taphius* H. & A. Adams, 1855 (gender : masculine), type-species, by original designation *Planorbis andecolus* d'Orbigny, 1835 (under the plenary powers not to be given precedence over *Biomphalaria* Preston, 1910);
 - (d) *Armigerus* Clessin, 1884 (gender : masculine), type-species, by designation by Morrison, 1947, *Planorbis albicans* Pfeiffer, 1839 (under the plenary powers not to be given precedence over *Biomphalaria* Preston, 1910);
- (3) to place the specific names of the type-species of the above genera on the Official List of Generic Names in Zoology."

At the close of the prescribed voting period on 5 January 1965 the state of the voting was as follows:

Affirmative votes—twenty (20), received in the following order: China, Holthuis, Lemche, Mayr, Vokes, Obruchev, do Amaral, Simpson, Boschma, Tortonese, Jaczewski, Bonnet, Evans, Ride, Binder, Uchida, Mertens, Alvarado, Stoll, Kraus.

Negative votes—six (6): Brinck, Riley, Sabrosky, Miller, Forest, Borchsenius. Voting Papers not returned—two (2): Hubbs, Munroe.

The following comments were made by Commissioners in returning their votes:

Mr. N. D. Riley (12.xi.64): "On reading the original application again, and in particular the comments circulated with this new Voting Paper, I am of the opinion that this is a case in which the Rules should not be suspended, unless it be for the purposes of establishing a satisfactory type-species for the genus *Planorbina*".

Mr. C. W. Sabrosky (23.xii.64): "I continue to oppose, and agree with the conclusion of Holthuis that "strict priority will lead to the least confusion here". The other objectors have concentrated on *Taphius* or *Biomphalaria*,

but no one has really evaluated the relative merits of *Planorbina* vs. *Biomphalaria*. *Planorbina* was adopted by Germain (1921), Thiele (1931) and Burch (1960). Adoption of *Planorbina* would have the double merit of following the Code (priority), and of permitting full taxonomic freedom to use any of the junior subjective synonyms as needed, without recourse to the Commission".

Prof. A. H. Miller (1.i.65): "I find it a confusing and poor principle to retain names and switch their priority rather than suppress them. Re-study of this case leads me to think we do not have a good solution and it is better to let priority hold sway".

Dr. J. Forest (4.i.65): "Je dois maintenir mon vote négatif. En effet, si la nouvelle proposition réponds aux objections d'ordre taxonomique, elle donne toujours la priorité à *Biomphalaria* sur des synonymes beaucoup plus ancien. Partageant l'opinion de L. B. Holthuis et de C. W. Sabrosky, je pense qu'il eut été préférable d'appliquer strictement la loi de priorité et de valider le nom le plus ancien, *Planorbina* Haldeman, qui, loin d'être un nom oublié a, à une époque récente et à plusieurs reprises, été utilisé par des malacologistes éminents".

ORIGINAL REFERENCES

The following are the original references for names placed on the Official Lists by the Ruling given in the present Opinion:

albicans, *Planorbis*, Pfeiffer, 1839, *Arch. Naturgesch.* 5 (1) : 354

andecolus, *Planorbis*, d'Orbigny, 1835, *Mag. Zool.* 5 : 26

Armigerus Clessin, 1884, *Conch. Cab. Martini-Chemnitz* (ed. 2) I, 17 : 120

Biomphalaria Preston, 1910, *Ann. Mag. nat. Hist.* (8) 6 (35) : 535, pl. 7, figs. 26, 26a

olivaceus, *Planorbis*, Spix, 1827, *Test. fluviat. Brasil.* : 26

Planorbina Haldeman, 1842, *Mon. Freshw. Univalve Moll. U.S.* : 14

smithi, *Biomphalaria*, Preston, 1910, *Ann. Mag. nat. Hist.* (8) 6 (35) : 353, pl. 7, figs. 26, 26a

Taphius H. & A. Adams, 1855, *Gen. rec. Moll.* 2 : 262

The following are the original references for designations of type-species for genera concerned in the present Ruling:

For *Planorbina* Haldeman, 1842: Dall, 1905, *Harriman Alaska Exped.* 13 : 84

For *Armigerus* Clessin, 1884 : Morrison, 1947, *Nautilus* 61 (1) : 30-31

CERTIFICATE

We certify that the votes cast on Voting Papers (63)26 and (64)24 were cast as set out above, that the proposal set out in the latter Voting Paper has been duly adopted under the plenary powers, and that the decision so taken being the decision of the International Commission is truly recorded in the present Opinion No. 735.

G. OWEN EVANS
Honorary Secretary

International Commission on Zoological Nomenclature

W. E. CHINA
Assistant Secretary
London
18 February 1965